

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #53]

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Paper No. 53

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Interview

with

Vito Cacciola

. . .

by

Merton R. Lovett

. . .

“As well as remembered.”

Interview with Vito Cacciola

by Merton R. Lovett

from memory

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"Yesterday I geta many rough visitors. Each was tougha than de last. One was practically paraliz-ed with alcohol. He ask-ed me for dime to buya drink. That drink was de drink to end all drinks. He hava de hangabove.

"Whata you say? De drunka wishes to geta cur-ed by eating a hair from de dog that bita him. That man geta bit-ed many times before. He has drink-ed many cures, but is yet de bum. De Bible saya that strong drinks bita worse than de serpent. It mentions not de dog.

"My second visitor hasa bugs in de head. Dear, Dear, Dear! He maka such foolish talk I geta frighten-ed.

"Yes, I knowa him. He too was fulla of whiskey to de eyes. Bye and bye he starts to weepa. What do you suppose he want-ed me to do?

"You is wrong. He wishes me to telephone to de bug house in Denvers; what you calla de unsane asylum. He saya, 'Vito, tella them to come geta me quick before I killa somebodys, I feela de crazy fit coma on.'

"By jingo, my knees shaka. He has liv-ed in Danvers many times. My, I worka de brain fast. I thinka that de police station is mosta near. I telephones there. Then I graba de 2 guitar and playa sweet music.

"What did I play? It wasa de Italian sleet song, de lullaby. I thinka it would calma him.

"It maka him shed more tears. He crya, 'Vito, you is lika my dear mother. I kissa you!'

"No, I escap-ed. De cops coma then. They tossa him in de wagon. I think he geta de nice rest in new police station.

"Now, I will tella you about MacDonald. My, My — it is de sad story.

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"He is de wild Irishman. He acta crazy when drunk. When nota drunk he is de nica man and good workman.

"Yesterday he wasa plastered. It is too bad. He acta like de Devil. He forgeta his little son, who is alter boy in de church. He forgeta his lovely children. He forgeta his wife who liva in Heaven.

"He trya to sell to me de bracelet.

"No, I do not think that he steals it. It belonga surely to his daughter. It is gold and mucha pretty.

"I trys to reforma him. I pleada for him with dethusiasm. I urge a him to stop de drink quickly.

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"No, I did not hava success. He does not owna de strong will. He says that he cannot giva up whiskey sudden. He must debilisha it gradually. Today he will needa nine drinks. Tomorrow eight whiskies will suita him. De next day he will drinka but seven. Some day he will drinka not at all.

"You cannot shama such peoples. They feela pride in their sin.

"Yes, I praya with him, Mr. Lovett, but he desulta God. He says, 'Vito, aska God to giva to me de quart. Your prayers maka me thirsty.'

"Oh, he is de good catholic when he is sober. He does not realize what he says.

"I did not buya de bracelet. I foola him. I taka it and giva to him two bits, but last night I senda it to his daughter.

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“Still, I thinka there is de chance he will geta cure. De good Lord has many times sav-ed drunkas. I have plac-ed him on my prayer list. I believe God will someday washa away his sin.”

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